



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held March 12, 2012 at the Kendallville Public Library with 18 members present.

Denny Coulardot reported that the muskies are beginning to be active. He has caught 17 in the past two weeks, averaging 5-6 per day and that movements have typically been in midday.

Denny also reminded those fishing for musky to keep drags loosened. This is especially important when using braided line. He also suggested that when hooks are bent when landing a musky (or any other big fish) it is important to replace the hook rather than bend it back into shape. Each time a hook is bent it is weakened to a certain extent. You may risk boating the fish of the season or a lifetime by not replacing a damaged hook.

John warned against eating any fish from Crooked Lake. Recently he and Dan Luley had kept a few bass caught there each week for the dinner table. The first week, Dan had pneumonia, the second week, he was diagnosed with diabetes, and the third week he suffered a heart attack that required two stints. He's doing well now, but John is now a bit concerned with his own health. Dan always provides great sandwiches for the fishing trips. Following his health problems, Dan's sandwiches contained healthy ingredients such as lettuce and chicken, while John's contained bologna!

To add insult to injury, Dan presented John with a doctor's slip that he didn't have to lift or throw out or lift the anchor until further notice!

John reported that his latest water temperature read-

ing was 41 degrees and that the fish were in and around the holes, however, that won't last for very long with the daytime temperatures reaching into the 70's. Those temperatures will probably not stay for long either, but the point is that we must be ready for changing conditions. Springtime brings the most wildly varying weather and water conditions of the season...hot for several days...cold for several days... The pre-spawn fish will be checking out the spawning areas whenever weather and water conditions permit. They may not be ready to spawn just yet, but the fish are hard-wired to always be prepared to complete the job whenever and whatever it takes to get it doneand we must be prepared as well. Our lure arsenals should include, in addition to Spoonplugs, a variety of weights of blade baits, jigs with various plastic trailers or tubes, and crank baits such as rattletails. We should be armed with spinning equipment spooled with lighter line, such as 8 lbs test, to be able to utilize small jigs.

John demonstrated the procedures he uses in the springtime to attack and jig a weedline. Actually the tactic can be used anytime, it's just that in the spring and fall when water temperatures are low, casting known structure can be just as, if not more effective than trolling. It should also be stressed, that lure speed on the cast is just as important as on the troll. Jump baits of differing weights and jigs tipped with plastic will offer the degree of variation needed to trigger a strike. All speeds need to be checked.

NEXT MEETING: April 16, 2012 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”



Denny Coulardot with a nice early spring musky



David Gould with a pair of March muskies

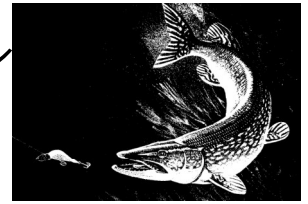


“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



A great deal of time was spent on viewing maps that were drawn by Spoonpluggers to show what they had found at the Chicago Outing.

Mapping and interpretation is the future of your Spoonplugging success.

Mr. Perry said that it was important that we record what we find. There is one thing about it. If you cannot draw what you have found, it is not likely that you will be able to fish it properly either. That goes for either casting or trolling.

Making a hand drawn map is to benefit you and only you. It does not have to be perfect.

The shape of the feature with breaklines, depths drawn in and the deep water shown and an arrow showing what is north is a good start. Shoreline sightings for anchoring positions and trolling passes should be noted also. When we talk of drawing a map, we do not mean to take five hours out of your day to draw it. We are talking about minutes, not hours. Some of the guys are using a camera to take pics of the shoreline sightings. This will surely help to remember, especially if the pic is put with the drawing of the feature.

You may not get the contact point the first time but eventually, it will be necessary for the final interpretation. Once you have done your homework and know exactly what trolling pass will catch the fish, you can now say that what you have done is correct.

Once you have a bit of success, this will bring confidence in your on-the-water skills and you will continue to improve.

Mapping is not just for beginners. Every tool that we can use for success is used. Markers, shoreline sightings, (take pics if this is easier), and drawing maps of what you find will lead to success. Mr. Perry says not to get lost on the water. We want to know where we are at all times and most important, we need to know exactly what exists below the water in order to be able to fish it properly.

We are still in the pre-spawn stage of the fishing season. In another month or so, you will start trolling a good bit of the time of your fishing day. Make sure you know what is there before you put a lure in the water. Take the time to look things over and make drawings of what you have found. Record your shoreline sightings also. If you are at a standstill in your fishing, think about what you are not doing that you should be doing and correct those mistakes. It's in the book.

Good Spoonplugging
John Bales

“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”



“The more I learn, the more I see there is to learn.” *E. L. “Buck” Perry*

BUCK SEZ:

Just don't forget that clear water can mean the movements are not as predictable; they occur deeper, for a shorter distance, and for less time than those in water of less clarity. It is for this reason, we consider the selection of water color as the most important thing you can do to make a good catch. You can't control the weather, the water conditions, the movements of the fish or his appetite, BUT you can control, in most instances, the water color.

In time, a good Spoonplugger can work out ANY water. If it's clear, it takes a little longer. He will work hard and become good in his interpretation and presentation.

Fortunately, the fisherman does not have to limit himself to just clear conditions. He usually has a choice of different bodies of water, or the SEASONAL CHANGES in water color that occur in both natural and man-made lakes.

In natural lakes there is a degree of change due to algae growth, pollution, boat activity, wind and rain run-off. In artificial reservoirs there is a seasonal change, and in addition, very few reservoirs exist that do not have different water color in different areas. Normally, the upper part of a reservoir will have darker color due to the feeder streams. A good rule to follow is to move toward the headwaters of the main channel or feeder streams when seeking darker water. This could also be true when the reverse is desired.

There are, however, some areas where a fisherman does not have access to a great variety of water. He is limited to water in his area that does not change during the season—a stabilizing water color. If this is a problem, he should realize it and fish accordingly. For instance, if the only available water is clear and deep, he knows from the study how light affects fish, he would have to expect the fish to be deep most of the time, and he would have to present the lures properly. If this proves too difficult, he would put the emphasis on picking the right weather conditions, such as cloudy, hazy, or rainy days; or fish early or late. Or at night so the clear water is partially offset by the darker conditions.

Most of the time we will be faced with too much clarity. But, in some sections of the country at certain periods of the year, we may face water which is too muddy. The entire lake may be affected, but still, some sections will have a greater degree of clarity (less muddy) than others. Most of the time the problem is not finding waters with more clarity, but rather **finding more dingy areas**. Your selection of water color will have a definite bearing on your catches. It could spell the difference between catching fish or not catching fish. It will determine whether or not fishing is easy or tough.

“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”